

**ESSENTIALS OF HUMAN ANATOMY.** By R. T. Woodburne. Fifth Edition. (Pp. x+629; 468 figures including 11 full colour plates. £8.25). New York, London and Toronto: Oxford University Press. 1973.

PROFESSOR WOODBURN'S textbook was first published in 1957, and it is now in its 5th edition; it has met with the approval of teachers and students in many parts of the world. The book gives a sensible, accurate, clear account of the structure of the human body, with functional and clinical relevance constantly in mind. It is designed, by a teacher of long experience, to be used as a companion to dissecting room studies: it therefore examines the body regionally, from superficial to deep; and by frequent cross-references, synoptic illustrations and stress on continuity of structures, it avoids the danger of 'dissociated learning' which too exclusive a regional approach is liable to engender.

There are many good things in the book, e.g. an excellent general introduction to the systems, 'details' in small print; interesting, rather old-fashioned coloured plates reminding one of early 19th century atlases; a good series of radiographs; tables of movements and muscle actions; a glossary of eponyms; some 200 key references; and a good index. On the other hand, I was not impressed with the black and white illustrations: many were too small, over-detailed and difficult to interpret. But perhaps my over-riding impression is that the book is rather unexciting: one longs to see an anatomy text which will fire the imagination of the young student, and induce him not only to see the relevance of the information but to love the subject for its own sake.

J.P.

**THE ESSENTIALS OF FORENSIC MEDICINE.** By C. J. Polson and D. J. Gee. Third Edition. (Pp. xvii+729; 160 figures. £12.00). Oxford: Pergamon Press. 1973.

TO have to review a textbook written by one's former chief and mentor could be difficult if it were dull and failed to blow a stimulating breath of fresh air on the subject. It could be equally difficult if it were a new edition not much different from the first. Happily this third edition of *The Essentials of Forensic Medicine* spared me from any such problems. It looks good and was a delight to read.

It is interesting to look back and see how this textbook has grown. The first edition published in 1955 without illustrations was intended principally for law and medical students and was an amplification of Polson's lecture course in forensic medicine at Leeds University, although I like to regard as the real first edition the bound volume of the lectures in type-script which Polson had long before made available to students in the library of the Leeds Medical School. The second edition of 1965 enabled Polson to build on a firm foundation and establish his book as a standard text; the material was enlarged and revised, illustrations were added, some of them in colour, and the bibliography was expanded. This third edition might well have been just a revision but it has taken on a completely new look. With the collaboration of David Gee who succeeded Polson to the Chair of Forensic Medicine at Leeds, there has been a re-arrangement of the text, considerable revision and enlargement of the chapters, the introduction of numerous illustrations and an extensive bibliography to each chapter. It contains the chapters usually found in textbooks of forensic medicine but they have now sensibly omitted discussion of the finer points of blood testing and grouping, an increasingly difficult subject properly in the field of forensic science, and they have added chapters on the scene of crime, anaesthetic deaths, the battered child and sudden natural death.

The book has grown in area, thickness, weight and price, the original £1.10s. having risen to £12. This cost now puts it beyond the personal ownership of most undergraduates but this was not by accident; the authors acceded to the request of the publishers to turn the book into one for pathologists and postgraduate students. They succeeded admirably; every pathologist coming face to face with medico-legal work must have a copy available for easy reference. It is an essential standard text for every medical and law library. What of the

undergraduates, general medical practitioners, hospital doctors, lawyers and police officers to whom the previous texts were also directed? These will still find the book informative and fascinating. The style is lucid and eminently readable, the print is clear and the paper much superior to previous editions. Few textbooks can be thumbed through as bedside reading but for those people not congenitally nauseated by forensic pathology, this is one. It's heavy on the fingers but it rests comfortably on the bedclothes. A word of warning. This book, like its predecessors, contains no toxicology. Those with poisoning in their hearts must turn to the companion volume *Clinical Toxicology* by Polson and R. N. Tattersall.

T.M.

**SYMPOSIUM: PUBERTY AND ADOLESCENCE.** Edited by A. T. Proudfoot. (Pp. 92; 5 figures. £1.50). Edinburgh: Royal College of Physicians. 1974.

THIS is one of a series of publications of symposia held at the Royal College of Physicians, Edinburgh. This is a short and brief book which gives an up-to-date summary of the diagnostic and therapeutic aspects of abnormalities of puberty and adolescence. It is not possible in a summary of the published proceedings of a conference of this type to do full justice to the subject. Nevertheless, the main function for such a conference is to act as an introduction to the subject and this little volume is an excellent beginning to someone interested in this field. There is a good brief summary by W. A. Marshall of the physical changes at puberty, which is based on the much more extensive volume by J. M. Tanner (*Growth at Adolescence*). There are good summaries of adrenocortical function and gonadal problems at puberty and a sensible discussion of what is perhaps the most common problem, the delayed onset of puberty in adolescent short boys. The book ends with some review of medical services and social services available for the adolescent based on the Scottish experience.

This symposium is a good attempt to bridge the gap between paediatrics and adult medicine, into which the adolescent child falls, and will be of interest to those physicians whose clinical interest falls on either side of that gap.

D.R.H.

**CONTROVERSY IN INTERNAL MEDICINE.** Volume II. Edited by F. J. Ingelfinger, R. V. Ebert, M. Finland and A. S. Relman. (Pp. 829. Illustrated. £7.90). London: Saunders. 1974.

ONE of the major dangers in the path of the mature physician is that of adopting an increasingly philosophical approach to his practice of medicine. This book caters for that need. It probably represents the point of view of your reviewer that he found it very interesting. A reviewer of the first volume stated "the frontpiece should contain in bold red type a warning to all residents who propose to sit for the Boards that they should avoid this book. If he were not confused before reading it he would have a written guarantee for confusion before he finished it." I think this criticism, at least of the second volume, is unjustified. The book is written for the post-mature physician who has some knowledge of the controversies which are raised but who need not necessarily be deeply versed in any one of these specialised subjects. There are two points of view in most controversies and the editors have tried to choose a distinguished proponent from each side. I think the discussions are more interesting in the subjects in which one is not personally involved and this is the aim of the book. Those of us who have research or clinical interests close to any particular controversy will find ourselves aligning with one or other side and the discussion of the controversy itself is probably less helpful.

The authors are chiefly from the U.S.A. and their points of view represent the approach in that country. However, there are many topics of interest to all physicians. For example—is internal medicine obsolete, exercise for the coronary patient, is aspirin a major cause of acute gastrointestinal bleeding, the management of gallstones particularly the silent variety, the management of cerebral ischaemia and others. Two topics in which this reviewer has